Evaluation of the Initiation to Teaching Project

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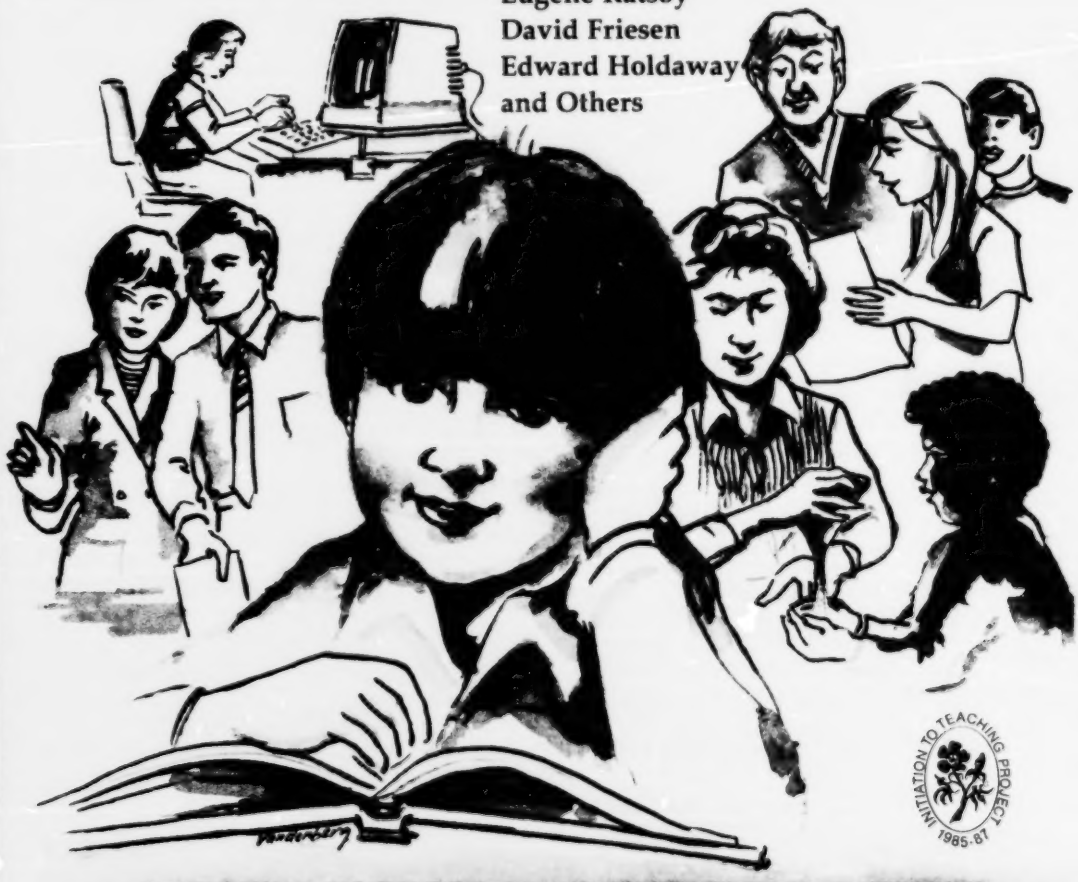

Alberta
EDUCATION

Summary Report

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EVALUATION OF THE INITIATION TO TEACHING PROJECT

SUMMARY REPORT

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ABSTRACT

In September 1985 a large-scale teacher internship project was implemented in schools in Alberta. During each of the 1985-86 and 1986-87 school years, this Initiation to Teaching Project provided nearly 900 recent graduates of university teacher preparation programs with employment as interns. Funding was provided by Alberta Education, Alberta Career Development and Employment, and school systems. The general purposes of this two-year program were to provide employment in teaching for recently graduated teachers who might otherwise be unemployed or underemployed, and to assess the utility of a year-long program in which the transition from university student to full-time teacher was undertaken more gradually and with more professional assistance than is usually the case with beginning teachers.

The Alberta Initiation to Teaching Project was evaluated extensively by a research team of 12 professors from the Universities of Alberta, Calgary and Lethbridge. This evaluation consisted of many elements: a literature review; the collection of information about internships in other professions; interviews with professors, in-school staff members and representatives of major educational organizations; questionnaires completed by professors, senior education students, beginning teachers, interns, supervising teachers, principals and superintendents; observation and coding of the teaching behavior of beginning teachers and interns; reports by superintendents and by consultants in regional offices of education; and analysis and assessment of this large volume of information. Recommendations for improving the program in its second year were made in June 1986; recommendations for future development of the teacher internship are made in the final evaluation report.

The evaluation revealed that the internship year facilitates the student-to-teacher transition. The numerous positive features and the strong support for the continuation of an internship program by virtually all major educational groups far outweighed the several negative features. Direct benefits, usually not available to beginning teachers, were experienced by interns. Benefits also accrued to supervising teachers,

to students and to the schools in which the interns were employed.

The respondent groups expressed overall support for the four specific purposes of the internship program: the refinement of teaching skills of interns, the assessment of the interns' suitability for placement, the development of professional relationships by interns, and the further development of professional skills of supervising teachers.

The review of practices in other countries and other professions revealed strong support in many Western countries for the introduction of a structured and well-planned entry year for beginning teachers to replace the typical "quick-immersion, sink-or-swim" approach to induction with its many negative consequences. Most professions have an introductory period and have found it to be beneficial for their interns, their profession and their clients.

Based on the evaluation of the 1985-87 Alberta Initiation to Teaching Project, the literature and research on teacher induction, and the experience of other professions, the following course of action is strongly recommended:

> *That, by September 1990, every beginning teacher--that is, one who has completed the university teacher preparation program and has never been employed on a regular, full-time contract--be required to complete successfully an approved internship, to be known as a "Teacher Residency Program" for "Resident Teachers." The program would have these central features:*
>
> 1. *length of residency to be an entire school year;*
>
> 2. *programs for resident teachers to be developed by each school jurisdiction in accordance with provincial regulations and guidelines;*
>
> 3. *resident teachers to be employed only in schools which are approved on the basis of*

their ability to offer suitable programs for resident teachers;

4. *emphasis to be placed upon effective teaching and classroom management;*

5. *supplementary experiences to be organized to allow the resident teacher to become familiar with the teacher's role, the operations of a school throughout the year, and student development during a school year;*

6. *teaching load to be substantially less than that of a full-time teacher at the beginning of the school year but to increase during the year;*

7. *supportive supervision with emphasis on formative evaluation and regular feedback to be provided by a trained team of support teachers, one of whom should be designated "Residency Advisor";*

8. *privileges enjoyed by other teachers to be extended also to resident teachers with respect to benefits, certification and re-employment, except that their salary should be in the order of four-fifths of that of beginning teachers; and*

9. *a "Teacher Residency Board" to be established as an independent authority with responsibility for designing the program, for developing regulations and guidelines, for approving schools in which resident teachers may be employed, for developing evaluation criteria and standards for successful completion of the Teacher Residency Program, and for overall direction and monitoring of the program; this board would be composed of representatives of the major educational organizations in the province.*

In recognition of the need for extensive consultation and planning prior to the implementation of the proposed mandatory Teacher Residency Program in

September 1990, the following interim measures are recommended:

> *That, by September 1988, every beginning teacher be required to participate in a year-long induction program that provides for a reduced teaching load and appropriate, skilled supervision; this would serve as a phasing-in period for the Teacher Residency Program described in the major recommendation.*
>
> *That, during the two-year period 1988-90, regulations and guidelines be developed for the Teacher Residency Program based on the findings of this study and on the experience with the beginning teacher induction program.*

To implement the major recommendation and the proposed interim measures, additional resources would be required to provide release time for resident teachers, support teachers and resource personnel, and to finance in-service activities for these three categories of personnel. In view of the benefits to all parties involved, the sources and amounts of these additional resources should be jointly determined by the major educational organizations in the province.

Alberta has a history of leadership in educational innovation. Another initiative, this time in teacher preparation, is now needed. The introduction of the Teacher Residency Program would enable teaching to join other professions in requiring a properly organized transitional experience for the graduates of its university preparation programs, thereby facilitating their entry into full-time professional practice. Adoption of the measures proposed would be in keeping with current views on teacher preparation and should enhance the provision of education throughout Alberta.

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EVALUATION OF THE INITIATION TO TEACHING PROJECT

SUMMARY REPORT

The purposes, methodology, findings and conclusions of the evaluation of Alberta's Initiation to Teaching Project are summarized in this report. These are followed by specific recommendations and associated comments.

Purposes of the Evaluation

The terms of reference for the evaluation of Alberta's two-year Initiation to Teaching Project called for the project to be assessed during each year of its implementation. Two foci were prescribed for the evaluation: (a) the project *outcomes* or ends sought in the form of impacts or effects "on interns, participating teachers and administrators as well as on various levels of government and institutions throughout the province"; and (b) the *components* which comprise the project, or the means employed to accomplish the ends, that is, "the structures and processes developed and employed provincially and locally and the associated conditions, principles and guidelines."

The two primary purposes for evaluating the project were (a) to evaluate the project summatively, that is "to contribute to the information required for a decision to discontinue the project or to assign it program status on the same basis or in modified form," by attending to project outcomes; and (b) to evaluate the project formatively, that is, "to provide one basis for decisions to modify and improve specific components of the project" during each of the two years of the project, particularly during the first year.

Four questions relating to each major purpose of the Initiation to Teaching Project were to be answered. These questions concerned, first, identifying *intentions* for the project and recording *observations* of project activities, in order to provide descriptive information about the internship program; and, second, assessing the *appropriateness* of various elements of the project and determining their *effectiveness* in achieving the intentions, in order to provide judgemental information.

As originally formulated, the Initiation to Teaching Project was designed "to help graduates of approved teacher education programs make the transition from student to professional teacher." Five specific purposes were outlined for the project:

1. refinement of teaching skills;
2. development of professional relationships;
3. assessment of the intern's suitability for placement;
4. assessment of the effectiveness of the internship program as a means of improving teaching competence; and
5. further development of the professional skills of supervising teachers.

In addition, it was recognized at the outset that the $28,000,000 investment in this two-year project by two government departments and participating school jurisdictions would provide employment each year for up to 900 prospective Alberta teachers who otherwise might have been either unemployed or employed outside the field of teaching.

Information on the degree of achievement of each of these purposes is provided in this summary report.

Research Methodology

The 1985-86 and 1986-87 evaluation phases used a variety of research methodologies, incorporating both qualitative and quantitative research strategies. The evaluation was a cooperative venture involving professors from the three Alberta universities which grant degrees in education. Classroom observations, semi-structured interviews, questionnaires and a review of relevant documents and related literature were employed in the various components of the study. In all, about 6,000 individuals provided evaluative information over the two years of the study. These evaluation activities resulted in interim reports which have been compiled in *Evaluation of the Initiation to Teaching Project: Technical Report, Volumes 1 and 2.*

Summary of Findings

The statements which follow summarize the findings from the analyses of the data collected during the two years of the Initiation to Teaching Project. These findings are taken primarily from the final report of the study entitled, *Evaluation of the Initiation to Teaching Project: Final Report.*

Findings from the First Year of the Evaluation

In the first year of the evaluation, information and opinions about the Initiation to Teaching Project were collected by means of interviews, questionnaires and direct observation of classroom performance. The findings from the interview and questionnaire data collected from representatives of major educational groups, superintendents, principals, supervising teachers, interns, beginning teachers, professors and senior students in teacher preparation programs at three Alberta universities are presented in this section.

1. *Perceived reasons for introducing the Initiation to Teaching Project.* In the first year of the evaluation, representatives of major educational organizations, principals and supervising teachers were asked to identify what they believed to be the reasons behind the introduction of the internship program in Alberta. The main reason put forward was to reduce unemployment and underemployment among teachers, which would thereby diminish discouragement and "save a cohort of teachers." Other reasons frequently mentioned included gaining political credit, restoring accountability to the teaching profession, producing better teachers, providing new teachers with a variety of experiences, and facilitating the transition from university student to competent teacher.

2. *Agreement with the stated purposes of the ITP.* In the 1985-86 evaluation, representatives of major educational organizations, superintendents, principals, supervising teachers, interns, professors and senior education students were asked to state the extent of their agreement with four of the five stated purposes of the internship program. In many respects, this entire study, and particularly the classroom observation component, was heavily focused on the fifth purpose: "assessment of the effectiveness of the internship as a means of improving teaching competence." For this reason the fifth purpose is not addressed here.

In general, representatives of major educational organizations, superintendents, principals of schools with interns, and supervising teachers were in strong agreement with the other four stated purposes of the Initiation to Teaching Project, namely, that the internship should provide for refinement of teaching skills of interns, development of professional relationships by interns, assessment of interns' suitability for placement, and further development of the professional skills of supervising teachers. Interns were in strong agreement with the first three of these stated purposes but expressed only moderate agreement with the fourth. Professors and senior education students agreed strongly with the first and moderately strongly with the second stated intent. Professors also agreed moderately with the third and fourth purposes,

whereas senior education students were quite uncertain about these two purposes.

Reactions by superintendents concerning whether the internship program had achieved its stated purposes disclosed that refinement of interns' teaching skills was most effectively fulfilled, that assessment of the interns' suitability for placement was substantially achieved, that the development of professional relationships by interns was achieved to a lesser degree, and that the purpose concerning the development of professional skills of supervising teachers was least effectively met.

3. *Positive features of the internship program.* Representatives of major educational organizations, in-school staff members, professors and senior education students were asked in the 1985-86 evaluation to identify what they considered to be the most positive features of the internship program. The program was seen as having benefits relating to present and future employment: assessment of interns for placement, assistance in making career decisions, and provision of a preferable alternative to unemployment and substitute teaching.

A second set of benefits related to improving the interns' competence as teachers. For example, it was thought to offer a variety of experiences, to provide for a gradual transition with "back-up" support, to enable the interns to become familiar with curricula and teaching materials, to provide opportunities to learn about teaching from experts, and to aid the interns in assessing personal strengths and weaknesses before assuming full-time teaching positions.

The third set of benefits related to schools and students. For example, the program was seen to provide additional educators in the schools, thereby increasing flexibility for various activities involving staff; it stimulated schools to evaluate their operations, facilitating team teaching and other team projects; and, by bringing in the special expertise of interns, the program offered extra enrichment to the students.

The fourth set of benefits related to supervising teachers: the program caused them to be reflective about

their own practices; it provided them with preparation time; it exposed them to new ideas and techniques; and it provided the intrinsic rewards that are associated with assisting new teachers to become more competent.

4. *Shortcomings of the internship program.* The respondents identified in point 3 were also asked in 1985-86 to identify program weaknesses. Those most commonly mentioned were the misassignment of interns, the lack of clarity about the roles of both interns and supervising teachers, the insufficient lead time and planning prior to the introduction of the internship program, the inadequacy of the salary paid to interns, the failure to award credit for internship on the salary grid for teachers, the lack of credit for the internship toward teacher certification requirements, the need for better training of supervising teachers, the unclear linkage between internship and future employment, the ambiguous status of interns compared with that of regular teachers, and the absence of clearly specified procedures for supervising and evaluating interns.

5. *Effects of the internship program.* Following the 1985-86 year of the internship program, superintendents of school jurisdictions were asked to indicate the effects of the program. The effects were seen as being primarily positive for students in the schools, for school-based personnel, and for parents and the community as a whole. The effects were seen as being either mixed or neutral for superintendents, deputy superintendents and other central office personnel. The effects were also seen as being either mixed or inconsequential in relation to the matter of allocating resources.

6. *Major suggestions for improvement.* All respondents in the 1985-86 evaluation phase were asked to suggest means for improving the internship program. The suggestions for improvement related primarily to the negative features identified. The following were the most frequently stated suggestions:

a. Select supervising teachers more carefully and provide better in-service education for them.

b. Prepare more specific guidelines concerning the role of interns, the role of supervising teachers and the placement and activities of interns.

c. Monitor more extensively the activities of interns and provide clearer guidelines for their evaluation.

d. Increase the salary of interns and provide living allowances for those in remote areas.

e. Allow certification and salary grid credit for internship experience.

f. Examine the role that universities could play in the internship program.

7. *Post-internship examination.* The matter of an examination following the internship, such as is associated with entry to other professions, was raised with superintendents, and samples of principals, supervising teachers, interns, beginning teachers and professors of education. In general respondent groups were not in favor of such an examination.

8. *Compulsory internship.* The question of compulsory internship was raised with all respondent groups in 1985-86. Compulsory internship for beginning teachers was favored by large majorities of principals and representatives of major educational organizations, and by about half of the supervising teachers, interns and professors of education. However, the beginning teachers and senior education students who supported this strategy were in the minority.

9. *Length of internship.* In the 1985-86 evaluation there was, among those who supported a compulsory approach to internship, strong support for a full year of internship. This was true for representatives of the

major educational organizations, principals, supervising teachers, interns and education professors.

10. *Permanent certification.* Only two groups--samples of principals and supervising teachers--were asked during the course of the 1985-86 evaluation interviews to comment on whether permanent teaching certification should follow successful completion of the internship year. A large majority of principals and a somewhat smaller majority of supervising teachers disagreed with this alternative course of action.

11. *Overall ratings of the internship program.* In the first year of operation, overall ratings for the internship program (on a ten-point scale where 1 was "Poor" and 10 was "Excellent") typically ranged from 7.5 to 8.5 for the various groups of interns, supervising teachers and principals--although the professors' rating was 7.1 and the senior education students' rating was 5.7. Representatives of the major educational organizations and superintendents rated the "administrative and policy aspects" of the program 6.1 and 6.9, whereas their ratings on the "professional development aspects" were both 7.9.

Recommendations Made at the End of the First Year of the Evaluation

Based on the general findings from the first year, and in keeping with the formative purposes of the first year of evaluation, 17 recommendations were made for changing either the practices or the provincial guidelines for the internship program. These were presented for consideration by the Initiation to Teaching Project's Director and Steering Committee. Each of these recommended modifications is stated below in italics, followed by a brief statement of the action(s) taken by Alberta Education in response to the recommendation. The Director of the project was the primary source of information concerning ensuing action.

1. The majority of respondents were very positive about the Initiation to Teaching Project. Many interns were provided with quality experiences, thereby fulfilling the expectations associated with a professional induction program. In some schools, however, interns were treated as an extra resource to be shared among many staff members or to help ease the load for teachers. In these schools, which were admittedly in the minority, provincial guidelines concerning placement, assignment, supervision and/or evaluation of interns were not being followed. As a result, at the end of the first year, the researchers recommended:

> *The provincial program should be more closely monitored in order to ensure that the internship project provides quality experiences for all interns.*

Subsequently, the Director of the Initiation to Teaching Project advised that Alberta Education had monitored the Initiation to Teaching Project more closely in the second year and that, in the case of perceived infractions, a closer liaison had been maintained between the Director of the Initiation to Teaching Project and the Alberta Teachers' Association. However, as in the first year, monitoring by Alberta's Regional Offices of Education was limited to a 10% sample (90) of the interns.

2. Although provincial guidelines implied that there should be a gradual transition to and immersion in teaching, this did not always occur. Some interns were assigned teaching responsibilities equivalent to a full teaching load at the beginning of the year or very early in the year. Some were assigned almost no teaching for extended periods of time. The researchers therefore recommended:

> *The provincial guidelines should clearly indicate that the main purpose of the internship is to provide a gradual transition from the role of initiate to that of full professional.*

In response, Alberta Education re-emphasized the transitional function of the Initiation to Teaching

Project in the provincial guidelines by specifying a teaching load of "30-40% of a normal teaching assignment near the beginning of the year progressing to 80-90% of a normal teaching assignment near the end of the year."

3. The roles of intern and supervising teacher were found to be vaguely defined, resulting in a diversity of practices and sometimes a "political tug-of-war" between interns and supervising teachers. There were no brochures or other publications available for school- and system-based personnel to consult about these roles. The researchers recommended:

> *The guidelines should be revised and made more specific in light of the first year's experience, and attractive brochures outlining the roles of interns and supervising teachers, in particular, should be prepared for use by principals, supervising teachers, interns and others.*

Alberta Education subsequently distributed brochures which included more specific guidelines on the intern's role and the supervising teacher's role. The *Initiation to Teaching Project Information Bulletin* elaborated on what interns could and should be doing and, to a lesser extent, on the role of supervisors. In addition, an advisory bulletin, *Intern Teachers: Our School Has One!* was prepared for distribution through the schools.

4. Although some principals and supervising teachers were well prepared to assume their new roles relating to the interns in their schools, the majority were not. Many had had some experience in supervising student teachers, but this was not considered to be a sufficient background for supervising interns. The researchers recommended:

> *Workshops for principals and supervising teachers should be provided before the school year begins and early in the school year, to equip them for their roles in the program; also, additional seminars during the year would be helpful in providing for an exchange of information and for refinement of supervisory skills.*

No specific supervisory in-service experiences were developed by Alberta Education, although some general in-service sessions on the Initiation to Teaching Project were conducted during the year in various school jurisdictions and at teachers' conventions. Primary responsibility for such workshops and seminars remained with individual jurisdictions. A change was, however, made in the project guidelines which indicated that supervising teachers were required to hold a degree, have a minimum of three years of teaching experience and possess a permanent teaching certificate.

5. Many interns were hired and placed well after the beginning of the 1985-1986 school year. This was understandable in view of the short lead time for the project. However, these interns missed the fall orientation programs provided in a number of schools and jurisdictions and they also missed the schools' opening activities. The research team's recommendation was:

> *Interns should be placed early--ideally, before the beginning of the school term--and each intern should participate in a school orientation program.*

Because placement and orientation of interns remained the responsibility of each jurisdiction, Alberta Education took no action on this recommendation. Consequently, as in the previous year, many interns were hired after schools opened in September 1986. Information provided by the Project Director revealed that, in 1985-86, 513 of the 899 interns completed full ten-month internships, 295 served as interns for five months or more but less than the full school year, and the remainder, 91, served for less than five months.

Corresponding figures for 1986-87, provided on June 9, 1987, were 665 for the full ten months, 178 for at least five but less than ten months, and 49 serving for less than five months, making a total of 892. Based on the assumption that those employed as interns on that date would remain in these positions until the end of June, this represented an increase in the percentage of interns who completed a full year of internship from 54% in 1985-86 to just over 74% in 1986-87.

6. In some schools interns were assigned to work with, perhaps, too many teachers. In other schools they were assigned to and worked with only one supervising teacher each; other teachers and other resources were not always made available. The researchers recommended:

> *All principals should be informed of the need to ensure that every intern is exposed to more than one supervising teacher, although one supervising teacher might hold the prime responsibility for directing the internship.*

A guideline revision was included encouraging school jurisdictions to allow interns to have opportunities to work with outstanding teachers. In general, interns were encouraged to work with a number of teachers. A statement to this effect was also published in an issue of the *Initiation to Teaching Project Information Bulletin*. Even so, interns in the second year of the project expressed less satisfaction--not more--with the variety of experiences offered.

7. Great differences in the nature and frequency of feedback provided to interns were evident in 1985-86. In some instances, feedback was provided by only one person; in other instances, it was provided by many. The criteria for evaluating performance and the degree of formality differed. There was no uniform set of "exit evaluation" standards. The researchers recommended the following:

> *Each intern should be provided with frequent feedback on work accomplished; this feedback should begin early in the year and continue throughout the year. The individual who is best situated to provide such frequent feedback is the supervising teacher. Feedback should be provided about skills of instruction, skills of classroom management, communication skills, knowledge of content, relationships with students, ability to motivate students, skills of evaluation (including self-evaluation) and growth in self-confidence. In addition, the researchers recommended that three or four formal visits should be made and a formal report provided by someone holding an*

administrative or supervisory role in the school or jurisdiction.

This issue was already addressed in a very general way in the 1985-86 *Initiation to Teaching Project Guidelines*. For example, the guidelines placed responsibility for the monitoring and evaluation of interns with the school jurisdictions, private schools and private ECS operators and they called for "guidance and supervision by certified teachers, selected by the principal subject to approval by the superintendent." Specific areas for feedback to interns were indicated in the 1985-86 guidelines and these were extended in 1986-87 to include classroom management, preparation of lessons and motivation of students.

8. Participation by interns in planned in-service experiences differed greatly in terms of the number and nature of such activities. In some cases, the types of in-service activities provided depended on what was available. For example, in small jurisdictions these activities typically were conferences; an intern might attend the annual conference of an ATA specialist council. Some jurisdictions provided their interns with regular workshops on effective teaching strategies, but these jurisdictions were not in the majority. The researchers recommended:

The larger school jurisdictions should be encouraged to develop quality workshops on effective teaching for interns and their supervisors, and Alberta Education should consider providing "workshops on call" for the smaller jurisdictions and private schools.

To a great extent, the larger school jurisdictions were already sponsoring workshops directed specifically at the needs of interns. Such workshops remained a responsibility of the jurisdictions. No further action was taken by Alberta Education except to sponsor general in-service sessions on the Initiation to Teaching Project as described under point 4.

9. Some interns worked at many grade levels and in several subject fields, whereas others were confined

primarily to one or two subject fields and often to a single classroom. The researchers recommended:

> *Each school should require participation by the intern in a variety of profession-related experiences including work at several grade levels and in a number of subject areas.*

The need for a diversity of experiences was reiterated in the *Initiation to Teaching Project Information Bulletin* with the statement that the school program should include "a full range of teaching experiences relative to the interests and abilities of individual interns." However, no change was made in the guidelines.

10. The degree to which interns were allowed to take total charge of classes varied greatly. Some were teaching full-time without other teachers being in their classes for most or, in a small number of instances, virtually all of the time; in other cases, the supervising teachers were almost always present and the interns were never completely in charge of classes. The researchers recommended:

> *The intern should be put in charge of a class for about one-third of the time at the beginning of the year, and the teaching responsibility should be gradually increased to the load of full-time teachers for periods during the year although, even in the last half of the year, the average teaching load should remain about two-thirds of that of full-time teachers.*

As stated under point 2, the guidelines for the Initiation to Teaching Project were rewritten to emphasize 30-40% of a normal teaching assignment near the beginning of the year to 80-90% near the end. This change was also published in a subsequent issue of the *Information Bulletin*.

11. The length of internship differed from intern to intern. In some cases internships lasted a full ten months and in others only a few weeks. It was recognized

that interns differed in their readiness to assume full-time teaching responsibilities at any given time during the year, and that the need for a teacher or teachers during the course of the school year differed in the various employing school jurisdictions. Nevertheless, the advantages of an internship lasting a full school year were generally recognized. The researchers recommended:

> *The length of each internship should be the full ten-month school year.*

No action could be taken on this matter during the pilot stage of the project. Provisions for hiring interns continued during the year, not just in early September, and many interns who were offered full-time teaching positions resigned from their internship positions in order to accept such offers. Nevertheless, as mentioned under point 5, it was interesting that approximately 74% of interns completed full-year internships in 1986-87 whereas the corresponding figure for 1985-86 was 54%.

12. Interns were treated in a variety of ways in the schools, sometimes as fully certificated members of staff and occasionally as no more than student teachers. In some cases, interns did not have regular locations to do their work or places to store books and other belongings. The researchers recommended:

> *The provincial guidelines for the Initiation to Teaching Project should specify the need for interns to have places of their own, similar to those provided for other teachers in the school.*

No action was taken on this recommendation.

13. Some dissatisfaction was expressed about three matters in particular: (a) the pay differences between interns and beginning teachers, (b) the fact that the experience as an intern did not carry credit on the salary grid and (c) the regulation that time as an intern did not count as part of the two-year probationary period for permanent teaching certification in Alberta. A review of practices in other professions revealed pay

differences between interns and beginning professionals, but full certification usually followed a successful internship experience. The researchers recommended:

> *A pay differential between interns and beginning teachers should be maintained; the experience as an intern should not be credited as teaching experience for salary purposes; but successful performance as an intern should be credited toward the requirements associated with permanent certification.*

Although the Steering Committee deliberated at length on these issues, no action was taken during the pilot stage of the Initiation to Teaching Project. (After the second year's evaluation, based on widely held opinion, the research team changed this recommendation with respect to credit for internship on the salary grid for teachers.)

14. Some jurisdictions which were desirous of engaging interns were unable to attract applicants. The question arose as to whether or not all jurisdictions, including private schools, should be permitted to hire interns. It was noted that, in the field of medicine, not all hospitals are approved for medical internships. A second question concerned a possible need to provide special financial allowances for interns who were willing to accept assignments with employing jurisdictions where living costs were high. The researchers recommended:

> *The quality of the supervision and professional development activities available for interns should be the determining factors in deciding which jurisdictions are permitted to hire and place interns, and cost-of-living allowances should be made available and transportation expenses covered for interns hired for employment in jurisdictions located in the more remote areas of the province.*

All approved jurisdictions were eligible to hire and place interns during the Initiation to Teaching Project. This meant that interns placed in some schools, particularly some of the small schools, did not experience variety in their activities, and occasionally

their supervision was provided by untrained supervising teachers. Regarding special financial allowances, jurisdictions were not prevented from supplementing the incomes of interns where teachers received cost of living allowances or other supplements. One jurisdiction did supplement the housing expenses of its interns.

15. There were great differences in the degree to which interns were treated as full-fledged teachers. Parents often did not know that interns held teaching certificates equivalent to those of beginning teachers. Some parents were concerned about their children being in the classrooms of interns. The researchers recommended:

> *Members of the profession and the public at large should be clearly apprised of the fact that all interns hold interim teaching certification and are eligible to teach as beginning teachers.*

In order to promote public confidence in the interns involved in this project, Alberta Education prepared for wide distribution the literature referred to following Recommendation 3.

16. There was considerable concern among interns and school staffs generally about whether all interns would have teaching positions in the following year. Not all schools and employing jurisdictions expected to have sufficient openings to accommodate all of their interns. Opinions were expressed that if successful interns did not obtain teaching positions, the Initiation to Teaching Project would be discredited to some degree. The researchers recommended:

> *The matter of placing interns in teaching positions following internship should not be left totally to chance; and continued publicity should be given to indicate that teaching positions could not be guaranteed following successful performance as an intern.*

No action was taken regarding this recommendation. A follow-up study of a sample of 151 interns during the month of September 1986 revealed that, among the 135

actively seeking full-time teaching positions in Alberta, 96 (71%) had secured such positions and an additional 27 (20%) had accepted substitute teaching positions.

17. Interns with handicaps or with highly specialized training were not always placed in situations where they could benefit maximally or, indeed, where full advantage could be taken of their special competencies. The researchers recommended:

> *Special cases, particularly interns with handicaps, should be given special attention in placement decisions.*

No action was taken regarding this recommendation. There was some indication that interns with handicaps were placed in situations that allowed for maximum benefits to be gained from their special competencies.

The 17 recommendations for change made at the end of the 1985-86 year of the Initiation to Teaching Project should not be considered as an indication that the program was seriously flawed. On the contrary, based on the findings presented in the preceding section, the first year of the project was generally well conducted and well received despite the short lead time for implementation. The recommended adjustments in some cases were associated with isolated difficulties--the sort that one might anticipate in the initial year of any program of this magnitude. Another strength of the project is evident in the comments following each of the 17 recommendations. These reveal that the Steering Committee and the Director of the Initiation to Teaching Project were, on the whole, very responsive with respect to these recommendations.

Findings from the Second Year of the Evaluation

As outlined above, the first year of the evaluation served primarily formative purposes and resulted in a number of recommendations for change in the second year. However, the first-year evaluation also provided findings which helped to focus the second-year evaluation on

various policy matters about which recommendations could be made relating to an internship program for teachers. The findings of the two-year classroom observation study are summarized here along with the findings relating to policy concerns.

1. *Improvement in teaching skills.* The results of the various components of the classroom observation study, which involved collection of observations on 26 teaching strategies, revealed that the Initiation to Teaching Project was effective in improving the classroom teaching skills of interns. In other words, beginning teachers with internship experience had made significant gains and were rated higher on these research-based skills than were beginning teachers without internship experience.

2. *Comparison of interns and beginning teachers.* Longitudinal comparisons of gains in teaching skills by both groups revealed that a year of teaching experience as either an intern or a beginning teacher was effective in improving classroom performance.

3. *Continuation of the internship program.* There was a clear preference by all 19 categories of respondents that the program of optional post-B.Ed. internship in Alberta should be continued. Fairly strong support was also shown for a compulsory internship, either following initial teacher preparation at university or as part of the university teacher preparation program. Senior education students and beginning teachers who had not served as interns were inclined to favor optional rather than compulsory internship.

4. *Developing internship policies and guidelines.* There was clear support for involving the five proposed categories of organizations--Alberta Education, the school systems, the Alberta Teachers' Association, the universities, and the Alberta School Trustees' Association (in approximately that order of preference)--in the process of developing internship policies and guidelines. Alberta Education was clearly favored to assume major responsibility in this area.

5. *Administering the internship program.* There was strong support within all respondent groups for the "major responsibility" for day-to-day administration of the internship program to reside with school systems, and for Alberta Education, the Alberta Teachers' Association and the universities to have "some involvement" in this task.

6. *Supervision of beginning teachers.* Moderately strong support was obtained from the respondent groups for assignment of beginning teachers to highly competent supervising teachers. Opinions were somewhat divided on the matter of reducing the teaching loads of beginning teachers--assuming that these were beginning teachers without internship experience.

7. *Permanent certification.* Respondents strongly supported the proposal of permanent certification following satisfactory completion of internship and one year of satisfactory teaching. This represented a change from the attitude in 1985-86 when the status quo was favored. The guidelines for the internship program made no allowance for experience as an intern and required two years of successful teaching for all beginning teachers whether or not they had had internship experience.

8. *Salary of interns.* When offered the alternatives of one-quarter, one-half, three-quarters and full salary of beginning teachers, strong support was advanced for a salary for interns of three-quarters of that of beginning teachers. Strong support was also offered for awarding at least partial credit on the teaching salary grid for the internship experience. The guidelines provided for an intern's salary ($15,600 over 10 months) to be approximately 62% of that of a beginning teacher and that there be no recognition on the teaching salary grid for experience obtained during service as an intern.

9. *Length of the internship.* The respondents clearly favored an internship of one year in length. During each of the two years, the majority of interns completed a full school year of internship. However,

particularly in the first year of the project, some started their programs well after the beginning of September, some assumed full-time teaching positions during the year and others accepted half-year internships beginning in January or February.

10. *Teaching load.* According to the respondents in this study, an intern should assume approximately half of the teaching load of a full-time teacher at the beginning of the internship, about two-thirds to three-quarters mid-way through the internship, and about the load of a full-time teacher when approaching the end of the internship. Practices varied widely in relation to teaching loads assigned to interns. Some were assigned virtually no teaching early in their internships and they experienced gradual increases in workloads over time. A significant number of others were assigned to full-time teaching as early as September. When compared with beginning teachers, most interns had lighter teaching loads, particularly early in the year, and these typically increased over the course of the year. Beginning teachers were usually assigned full teaching loads early in the year which they maintained throughout the year.

11. *Internship activities.* From a list of 15 possible internship activities, respondents expressed very strong support for including the following five activities in provincial guidelines: (a) "teaching the same class or classes for a period of several months," (b) "professional development activities at the system and/or provincial level," (c) "in-school professional development activities," (d) "interviews with parents about progress of students," and (e) "interacting with other interns in formal workshops focusing on internship." Since the nature and quality of the interns' experiences differed so greatly from school to school, it was not surprising to find strong support for a clearer role description for the internship experience which would separate it from both student teaching and full-time beginning teaching and yet provide substantial variety.

12. *Supervision of interns*. Respondents considered that interns should be directly accountable to principals. However, there was strong support for each intern working on a day-to-day basis under the supervision of a supervising teacher or teachers. The nature and quality of supervision provided to interns varied greatly, as did the number of supervising teachers associated with a given intern. Although the help provided was generally rated highly, a substantial number of interns--and of beginning teachers--received less help than they had expected. The main source of supervision for beginning teachers was principals, whereas for interns it was supervising teachers.

13. *Feedback and evaluation*. Very strong support was provided for the development of provincial guidelines specifying that (a) feedback be provided to interns along with discussions on how to improve performance and (b) standard criteria be created for evaluation of interns throughout Alberta. As with supervision generally, feedback and evaluation for interns and beginning teachers varied greatly in frequency and in quality. In several of the larger jurisdictions, principals and supervising teachers had participated in workshops on effective teaching. Feedback in these cases was generally frequent and helpful. In other instances it was infrequent and was judged to be ineffective. In a few cases there was more frequent evaluation than was considered either necessary or desirable.

14. *Formal evaluation of interns*. There was very strong support for supervising teachers performing formal evaluations of interns and acting as the final authority for formal (written) evaluations, and considerable support for principals carrying out these functions. The suggestion that formal evaluation of interns be performed by a central office supervisor or administrator, or indeed by anyone else from outside the school such as a supervisor from an Alberta Regional Office of Education, met with little favor.

15. *Qualifications of supervising teachers*. Respondents very strongly supported the development of provincial guidelines specifying minimum competency

criteria for supervising teachers. They also strongly supported guidelines specifying minimum academic qualifications for supervising teachers. Few explicitly stated criteria were used for selecting supervising teachers. Selection was usually based primarily on the administrator's decision or on interests expressed by teachers.

16. *Supervisory training for supervising teachers.* A large majority of supervising teachers had had no training in the supervision of teaching. There was generally strong support for provincial guidelines requiring that "school systems should be responsible for providing supervisory training for supervising teachers," and strong support in some circles, but only moderate support in others, that provincial guidelines should specify that "training in the form of short courses or university classes in supervision and effective teaching should be required for all supervising teachers." In general, and particularly in rural areas, there was little evidence of regular programs of in-service education having been provided for supervising teachers.

17. *Teaching loads of supervising teachers.* Opinion was divided about whether or not the teaching loads of supervising teachers should be reduced to compensate for their assumption of responsibility for supervision of interns.

18. *Selection of supervising teachers.* The respondents strongly supported involvement of principals in the selection of supervising teachers. There was very little support for out-of-school administrative and supervisory personnel being involved in this process.

19. *Assignments for interns.* Assignments for interns within schools were determined primarily by school administrators in consultation with the interns concerned. Few schools had well-articulated professional development plans. This resulted in a wide variety of experiences across subject areas, grade levels and activities. Some interns functioned primarily as teachers' aides and others as regular classroom

teachers--both alternatives contravened the provincial guidelines.

20. *Selection of schools for placement of interns.* Schools to which interns were assigned were selected primarily on the basis of school needs and staff interests. In rural areas, schools were frequently selected on the basis of needs of the jurisdictions. Thus, in many cases, interns stated that the placements were not suited to their interests and needs, especially with respect to grade levels of placements and variety of experiences available. In addition, opportunities for in-service education in small schools were rarely available.

21. *Inservice education for interns.* Inservice education for interns was frequently the same as that for beginning and other teachers. Although activities for interns often centered on improvement of teaching skills, interns identified a number of other in-service needs: classroom management and control, planning and organization, evaluation of students, and self-evaluation.

22. *Employment prospects.* Many jurisdictions which hired interns did not have full-time teaching positions available for these individuals following their successful completion of the internship year. This was seen by many as a negative feature of the program. As indicated earlier, the September 1986 follow-up study of 151 former interns revealed that, of 135 actively seeking full-time teaching positions in Alberta, 96 (71%) had secured such positions and an additional 27 (20%) were substitute teaching.

23. *Overall value of the internship program.* Individuals who were or had been directly involved in the internship program as interns, supervising teachers, principals or superintendents provided very high ratings of the Alberta internship scheme as a means of facilitating the transition from student to professional teacher. Their average ratings ranged from 7.9 to 9.1 on a ten-point scale. Other respondents, such as beginning

teachers, second-year teachers with no internship experience, and senior education students were much less convinced about the capacity of an internship to fulfil this role; their average ratings ranged from 4.5 to 6.9. Professors and senior students at one of the universities, which has a longer practicum as part of its teacher preparation program, were also much less favorably disposed in this respect than were their counterparts at the other two universities, where the practicums are shorter. Students enrolled in certain types of specialized programs anticipated no difficulty in finding positions as beginning teachers: these students also tended to assign a low rating to the internship program.

Conclusions

From the results of the two-year evaluation of the Initiation to Teaching Project, a set of twenty conclusions was formulated as follows:

1. *Support for a transition program for beginning teachers.* Very strong support was found both for some form of transition program similar to Alberta's pilot internship project for teachers and for this transition program to extend over a full school year.

2. *Comparison of beginning teachers who had completed internships with beginning teachers having no such experience.* In skill areas which research has shown to be important, beginning teachers who had completed internships performed significantly better than did beginning teachers without internship experience.

3. *Activities for interns.* The role of the intern was found to be vaguely defined, resulting in a diversity of practices in the schools. Some interns worked at many grade levels and in several subject fields, whereas others were confined primarily to one or two subject fields and often to one classroom each. The findings of the study strongly supported the provision of internship experience in different subject matter fields, at different grade levels, and in different activities. At

the same time, respondents indicated that the internship should also allow for extended contact of several months with the same class or classes. (By way of comparison, medical internships in Alberta require rotations in the five major fields of medicine, each for a minimum of six weeks.)

4. *Status of interns.* Interns were treated in a variety of ways by staff and students in schools and by members of the public. Sometimes they were viewed as fully certificated members of staff and sometimes as student teachers. Differences in treatment were manifested in these ways: some interns had no space assigned in which they could do their work; some parents treated interns as if they were teacher assistants; some teachers treated interns as if they were teacher aides; some interns were required to serve as substitute teachers; some teachers and students treated interns as if they were student teachers; and some interns were put in charge of classes with little provision for supervision or feedback. Thus, the status of interns was frequently vague and ambiguous, tending to be subordinate rather than collegial in relation to other teachers in the school.

5. *Placement of interns in schools.* Schools frequently chose "to hire" interns on the basis of school needs. In many cases the desirable features of an effective internship program were either missing or minimally present For example, interns were not always provided with a variety of activities, experience at several grade levels, access to competent supervisory staff or experience to take advantage of their special competencies. Interns were not always placed in schools or classrooms best suited to their preparation or skills. Some claimed that their placements did not take into account their handicaps or other special circumstances.

6. *Teaching loads for interns.* Although practices varied widely, there was a clear consensus that interns should be given about half of the teaching load of a full-time teacher at the beginning of their internships, but that the teaching loads should be closer to those of full-time teachers by the end of the internships.

Scheduled time during the school day for preparation, for discussion of performance and for in-service education, particularly during the first half of the internship, was seen to be warranted.

7. *Teaching loads for beginning teachers.* Respondents advocated reduced teaching loads, particularly early in the school year, for beginning teachers without internship experience.

8. *Feedback to interns and beginning teachers.* Great differences were evident in the nature and frequency of feedback provided to interns and beginning teachers. Both interns and beginning teachers identified the availability of feedback on specific aspects of teaching as their highest concern. In relation to interns, there was very strong support among all of the respondents that feedback on performance should be provided regularly, primarily from supervising teachers.

9. *In-service programs for interns.* The number and nature of planned in-service experiences for interns differed greatly from school to school. Frequently, in-service education for interns centered on improvement of teaching skills and was the same as that for other teachers. However, interns identified a number of specific in-service needs, especially classroom management and control, planning and organization, evaluation of students, and self-evaluation.

10. *Evaluation of interns.* There was general agreement that interns, like other teachers in the school, should be accountable to the principal--as was the typical practice. Day-to-day supervision and evaluation of interns were generally seen to be the responsibility of supervising teachers. Administrative and supervisory personnel tended to favor principals having the final authority for the evaluation of interns, whereas the other groups tended to favor supervising teachers having this authority.

11. *Supervisors of beginning teachers and interns.* Respondents strongly supported the idea that beginning teachers and interns should have highly competent supervisors assigned to them. They also supported the provision of professional development activities for supervising teachers, with a focus on the skills of observation and coaching, and on the strategies associated with effective teaching.

12. *Role of supervising teachers.* The role of supervising teachers was vaguely defined, resulting in a diversity of practices. Some staff members assumed the role to be primarily that of mentor, confidant, colleague, role model or support teacher. Others tended to treat it as director, supervisor or evaluator, thereby emphasizing a status difference between supervising teacher and intern. This role ambiguity was compounded by the fact that in some schools one teacher assumed full responsibility in relation to a given intern, while in others several teachers shared the supervisory duties. Sometimes principals or assistant principals assumed the role of supervising teacher.

13. *Teaching loads of supervising teachers.* Opinions were divided on whether teachers who supervise interns should have reduced teaching loads. On the one hand, their workloads increased because of their supervisory responsibilities; but on the other hand, their actual teaching loads decreased, particularly as interns gained more competence during the year.

14. *Salary of interns.* Strong support was obtained for the salary of interns being less than that of beginning teachers. When offered the alternatives of one-quarter, one-half, three-quarters or full first-year salary, most respondents deemed three-quarters of a beginning teacher's salary to be reasonable. (Teacher aides earned about the same amount as did interns in 1986-87, that is, approximately 62% of a beginning teacher's salary.)

15. *Credit for internship experience.* There was strong support for the time spent in an internship being

recognized in two ways: (a) permanent certification after one year rather than two years of successful teaching following satisfactory completion of a year-long internship, and (b) partial credit, such as half of an experience increment, on the salary grid for teachers.

16. *Employment after internship.* Successful completion of an internship did not necessarily lead to a full-time teaching position. Many employing jurisdictions did not have sufficient full-time positions for their interns in the following year. This resulted in the interns spending considerable time and energy throughout their internships exploring job opportunities.

17. *Certification examinations for teachers.* Most of the respondents disagreed with the introduction of certification examinations for teachers in Alberta. (Most professions require certification examinations to be passed before completion of induction into professional practice. Moreover, a number of states in the U.S.A. have begun to implement certification examinations for teachers.)

18. *Policies and guidelines governing neophyte teachers.* There was strong support for Alberta Education having major responsibility for developing internship policies and guidelines. There was also support for school systems, the Alberta Teachers' Association, the universities and the Alberta School Trustees' Association having some involvement in this process.

19. *Administration of the internship program.* All respondent groups strongly supported the view that primary responsibility for the day-to-day administration of the internship program should reside with the school jurisdictions, but that Alberta Education, the Alberta Teachers' Association and the universities should have some involvement in this task.

20. *Impact on existing teacher preparation programs.* No clear indication was obtained concerning how a continuing internship program would affect existing

teacher preparation programs. However, the likelihood that courses and practicums would need to be modified was raised. Some respondents considered that programs for preparing teachers would need major revisions.

Alternatives Explored

Problems associated with easing the transition from university student to confident practitioner are encountered in all professions. Different procedures for coping with these problems have been adopted by the various professions. In the field of teacher preparation considerable attention has been given to two related approaches for bridging the gap between university student and practicing teacher: (a) beginning teacher induction programs and (b) programs of internship in teaching.

Although designed to serve substantially the same purpose--that of orienting novice teachers to the world of practice--these two types of programs operate in different ways. Induction programs for beginning teachers are designed--at least theoretically--to serve a multiplicity of purposes such as orienting the novice to a particular school and classroom, employing jurisdiction, specific community, the profession in general, as well as the particular subject-matter areas and technology of teaching at given grade levels. Internship programs tend to focus primarily on the latter two areas, usually addressing problems relating to the theory-practice dichotomy. The assumption made in typical beginning teacher induction programs is that the novice is reasonably well prepared to assume a full-time teaching position but may need assistance with orientation to the local situation. The assumption made in internship programs is that the novice is not yet a fully prepared teacher and needs to acquire additional knowledge and skills related to teaching.

In view of the positive reactions to the Initiation to Teaching Project by those who were directly involved in its design and operation, and recognizing that virtually every employing authority in the province has some form of induction experience for its new teachers, the researchers realized that the primary need in Alberta

at present is not for induction programs, narrowly defined. Instead, what is required is an approach with many of the features of a well-designed internship program. The researchers recognized, nevertheless, that induction programs would still have their place and could serve as temporary measures pending the implementation of a well-planned and carefully articulated transition program for beginning teachers.

As stated earlier, the two primary purposes of the evaluation of Alberta's Initiation to Teaching Project were (a) to evaluate the project summatively, that is "to contribute to the information required for a decision to discontinue the project or to assign it program status on the same basis or in modified form," by attending to project outcomes; and (b) to evaluate the project formatively, that is "to provide one basis for decisions to modify and improve specific components of the project" during each of the two years of the project, particularly during the first year.

Based on the review of entry programs in other professions, on recent practices and research on entry programs in teaching, and especially on the findings of the two-year evaluation, the members of the research team recommend the introduction of a full-year transition program for all beginning teachers in Alberta. Very little support was evident in this study for a return to the 1984-85 situation in which beginning teachers were expected to assume virtually the same teaching responsibilities as those of experienced teachers. Therefore, in keeping with the first purpose of the evaluation study, the research team arrived at the following major conclusion:

> *That the Initiation to Teaching Project be given program status but in modified form.*

In considering the form of this program, various entry practices used in teaching and other professions, in North America as well as elsewhere, were examined. From this review, several possible alternatives were developed, four of which have been explored in the study because of their potential relevance for the Alberta situation. The research team reviewed the findings associated with these four alternatives; in addition, the researchers developed a fifth approach that combines desirable features of the other four alternatives.

Specific Approaches Considered

The five alternatives considered are listed and discussed below, including the alternative on which the Initiation to Teaching Project was based, namely, "optional internship for interim-certificated beginning teachers." Because this alternative is referred to elsewhere as "optional post-B.Ed. internship," an explanation is warranted. Since there are two major programs leading to interim teaching certification in Alberta, only one of which requires completion of the B.Ed. degree, technically speaking the label "optional post-B.Ed. internship" is relevant as a potential designation only for those beginning teachers who have completed this so-called regular B.Ed. program. Another program exists for the holders of approved degrees wishing to obtain interim certification as teachers. To qualify for interim certification, the holders of approved degrees (other than the B.Ed.) are required to complete certain designated university courses which do not necessarily lead to completion of the B.Ed. degree. Thus, interim certification is contingent upon holding the B.Ed. or, for holders of approved degrees, upon completing a number of prescribed university courses. For both types of these interim-certificated teachers--individuals of neither type having previously held employment as teachers--the inclusive label "interim-certificated beginning teachers" has been chosen.

Alternative 1: Mandatory Internship as Part of the University Teacher Education Program

This alternative and Alternative 4 described below received about equal support--but somewhat less than for Alternative 3--among the four alternatives presented for consideration by the various respondent groups in the study. This option at least partially resembles a number of Master of Arts in Teaching programs offered in the United States--programs which are university-controlled and are often patterned after the MBA in that entrants require a baccalaureate degree for entry and obtain a Master's degree upon completion. To recommend that a similar program be made compulsory, particularly without the added incentive of a Master's degree credential as

in the U.S.A.--even if it were part of a B.Ed. program--did not seem appropriate for Alberta. Considerable change to teacher preparation at the universities would be needed and it does not seem feasible that the universities would be able to effect changes of this magnitude at this time.

Alternative 2: Optional Internship as Part of the University Teacher Education Program

This alternative would add a significantly different program route to the existing teacher preparation programs at Alberta universities. The addition would be that described in Alternative 1 above, and education students would be permitted to choose whether or not to include an internship as part of their university program. For the respondents this was the least favored of the four alternatives, perhaps because of the many administrative problems it could be expected to create. The research team agreed with the respondents that this alternative was inappropriate for Alberta.

Alternative 3: Optional Internship for Interim-Certificated Beginning Teachers

The Initiation to Teaching Project approach, of optional internship for interim-certificated beginning teachers, received the strongest support from the majority of respondent groups in the study. The following positive features of the optional internship program were identified: that beginning teachers were provided with two alternatives from which to choose (beginning teacher or intern position) as were their employing jurisdictions; that interns developed teaching skills and professional competencies; that, in most of the facets researched, greater satisfaction was experienced by the interns than by the beginning teachers who had not had internship experience; and that the schools as well as the interns benefited from the program. Negative features encountered and dissatisfaction expressed by the interns and school jurisdictions related to the low salary paid to interns; lack of provision for credit toward permanent teacher

certification; lack of formal recognition for internship experience on the salary grid for teachers; problems with the placement, supervision and continuity of employment of interns; and the wide variation among internship practices. The desire by many interns to be recognized as fully certificated teachers and to be employed as such was also noted. Although the optional one-year internship for teachers was received very favorably, in practice it was in large measure an experimental program. The two-year project revealed a number of problem areas that needed to be addressed. It was, therefore, not accepted by the researchers as the approach that merited highest priority among the five alternatives considered.

Alternative 4: Mandatory Internship for Interim-Certificated Beginning Teachers

As indicated above, this alternative and Alternative 1 were supported about equally as the second choice of the respondent groups. By providing generally equitable treatment for all beginning teachers, this alternative would resolve several of the perceived difficulties associated with an optional internship program. Some of the issues associated with the 1985-87 internship program might still need to be resolved, such as salary for interns, supervision of interns and employment following the internship. The problem of interns and their beginning teacher colleagues being treated differently, as was the case in the 1985-87 project, would be resolved with a mandatory internship because all novice teachers would be required to serve an internship year. Despite its potential drawbacks, the researchers recognized the many advantages of this alternative. It therefore provided the basis for Alternative 5 below, which is the recommended approach.

Alternative 5: Mandatory Residency for Interim-Certificated Teachers

In order to resolve many of the problems associated with Alberta's experimental internship for teachers, the research team developed an approach, that the researchers have labeled the "Teacher Residency Program," to build on

the experience gained from the Initiation to Teaching Project. This approach bears a strong resemblance to Alternative 4 and is considered to be more appropriate than the other three alternatives reviewed because it makes provision for meeting more of the needs associated with transition programs. Hence, this alternative combines a number of features from the preceding alternatives that are appropriate for an entry program for neophyte teachers in Alberta. It also draws on experience and developments elsewhere and on practices in other professions. The main characteristics of this approach are described in the recommendations section.

Recognizing the problems that were associated with the short lead time from initial announcement to implementation of the Initiation to Teaching Project--approximately four months--the research team developed a two-stage proposal for putting its preferred approach for teacher induction in place in Alberta over a three-year period. The first set of recommendations draws on the writings, research and practices associated with well-planned teacher induction programs. To allow sufficient time for implementation of the recommended mandatory residency program for neophyte teachers, the first stage, to be put in place in September 1988, involves an *induction year* for beginning teachers. Details of this proposed induction year follow the recommendation concerning the Teacher Residency Program.

During the next three years detailed planning should be undertaken for the purpose of installing the mandatory Teacher Residency Program that is described in the next section. Implementation in Alberta could be completed by September 1990. This three-year period would allow all major educational organizations in the province to participate in the discussions and planning, and to make the necessary modifications in their own operations. With a mandatory residency program in place, some adjustments would have to be made to teacher preparation programs at the universities; this intermediate phase would permit the necessary program revisions to be made. Furthermore, supervisory and monitoring personnel would need to be prepared, and schools approved to provide programs for resident teachers, and for this considerable lead time would be necessary.

Recommendations

Based upon the evaluation of the 1985-87 Alberta Initiation to Teaching Project, the literature and research on teacher induction, and the experience of other professions, the following course of action is strongly recommended:

> *That, by September 1990, every beginning teacher--that is, one who has completed the university teacher preparation program and has never been employed on a regular, full-time contract--be required to complete successfully an approved internship, to be known as a "Teacher Residency Program" for "Resident Teachers." The program would have these central features:*
>
> 1. *length of residency to be an entire school year;*
>
> 2. *programs for resident teachers to be developed by each school jurisdiction in accordance with provincial regulations and guidelines;*
>
> 3. *resident teachers to be employed only in schools which are approved on the basis of their ability to offer suitable programs for resident teachers;*
>
> 4. *emphasis to be placed upon effective teaching and classroom management;*
>
> 5. *supplementary experiences to be organized to allow the resident teacher to become familiar with the teacher's role, the operations of a school throughout the year, and student development during a school year;*
>
> 6. *teaching load to be substantially less than that of a full-time teacher at the beginning of the school year but to increase during the year;*

7. *supportive supervision with emphasis on formative evaluation and regular feedback to be provided by a trained team of support teachers, one of whom should be designated "Residency Advisor";*

8. *privileges enjoyed by other teachers to be extended also to resident teachers with respect to benefits, certification and re-employment, except that their salary should be in the order of four-fifths of that of beginning teachers; and*

9. *a "Teacher Residency Board" to be established as an independent authority with responsibility for designing the program, for developing regulations and guidelines, for approving schools in which resident teachers may be employed, for developing evaluation criteria and standards for successful completion of the Teacher Residency Program, and for overall direction and monitoring of the program; this board would be composed of representatives of the major educational organizations in the province.*

Individuals who currently complete university teacher preparation programs in Alberta are eligible to receive interim teaching certificates, allowing them to assume full-time assignments as beginning teachers. The term "intern" has led to some confusion among members of the public and among some teachers who have assumed that the certification status of interns was less than that of full-fledged teachers. There was also a need to separate the proposed Teacher Residency Program from the Initiation to Teaching Project and to distinguish this proposal from other "internship" programs, such as those in Saskatchewan, which are part of the university pre-service teacher education program and which are in essence extended practicums.

The terms "resident teacher" and "residency" have been selected in preference to "intern" and "internship" to give recognition to the qualifications held by those who complete their teacher preparation programs at Alberta universities and to acknowledge the importance of

the language used and the labels chosen. Other terms may be proposed but, for the sake of convenience, "resident teacher" and "residency" are used throughout the recommendations section of this report. Under this proposal, *a resident teacher would be an interim-certificated teacher in the first year of full-time continuous employment, and a residency would refer to a full-year program incorporating the elements described above.*

The term "Residency Advisor" is used here as a replacement for "supervising teacher," which was the specific label used to designate the teacher responsible for the supervision of the intern during the period of the pilot project. Residency advisors would be fully qualified Alberta teachers meeting certain additional competency criteria including specialized training in effective teaching practices and in the supervision of teaching. They would be selected by principals of the approved schools to act as advisors to resident teachers. Training programs for resident advisors would be provided by means of university credit courses and/or special in-service programs.

Based on the findings associated with the evaluation of the Initiation to Teaching Project, it is evident that provision should be made for frequent feedback to each resident teacher concerning skills of instruction, skills of classroom management, communications skills, knowledge of content, relationships with students, ability to motivate students, evaluative skills (including reflective practice) and growth in self-confidence. The researchers considered that this function should be performed by the residency advisor.

Although continuity in one situation was viewed as important by respondents in the evaluation study, so was the need for some variety of experiences. The latter might be provided by a range of classroom-related activities as well as the assignment of one or more "support teachers" in addition to the resident advisor. Support teachers would differ from resident advisors in that they would hold no formal responsibilities for evaluating the resident teacher. Instead, they would act in a primarily collegial role as mentor/coach/confidant and would provide alternative experiences and perspectives. As with the evaluation of the Initiation

to Teaching Project, there arises a concern that assignment to one residency advisor for the entire residency would not maximize the potential that could be realized in the program. In other professions, rotations across a variety of specialized fields are common and are frequently mandated components of entry programs, and this is recommended for the proposed program for beginning teachers in Alberta. Such varied experience would be beneficial also to beginning teachers during the interim period prior to full implementation of the Teacher Residency Program.

Resident teachers, like many of the interns during the 1985-87 internship program, would make a worthwhile contribution to the schools to which they are assigned. However, the training component must also be recognized. The possibilities for misassignment and non-adherence to regulations and guidelines suggest that each resident teacher should have recourse to an "Advocate" who, ideally, would not be employed in the same jurisdiction. Each resident teacher should be monitored from time to time by this external advocate. This individual might be a professor, a consultant with one of Alberta's Regional Offices of Education, or a professional development consultant with the Alberta Teachers' Association.

A place for the university is also apparent. With some 1,600 new graduates of teacher preparation programs becoming eligible for interim certification each year in Alberta, and assuming an average of two support teachers for every beginning teacher, this means a large cadre of support personnel would be needed, many of whom would require training in the areas identified above. University short courses and other university-sponsored in-service activities and regular credit courses on supervision of instruction and effective teaching might be made available on call to school jurisdictions and support teachers.

Under the proposed residency program, beginning teachers who complete their pre-service teacher preparation outside Alberta should also be eligible for the Alberta Teacher Residency Program provided that they qualify for interim certification in this province.

A number of states in the U.S.A. which have introduced internship programs have recognized the need for a state bureau of teacher internship. The establishment of a similar autonomous bureau, labeled the Teacher Residency Board, is recommended for Alberta. This board would be responsible for establishing policies and guidelines, for specifying the minimum standards expected in residency programs, for developing the process for approving schools in accordance with these standards, for developing criteria for evaluation and standards for successful completion of the program, and for overall direction and monitoring of the program.

In recognition of the need for extensive consultation and planning prior to the implementation of the proposed mandatory Teacher Residency Program in September 1990, the following interim measures are recommended:

> *That, by September 1988, every beginning teacher be required to participate in a year-long induction program that provides for a reduced teaching load and appropriate, skilled supervision; this would serve as a phasing-in period for the Teacher Residency Program described in the major recommendation.*

> *That, during the two-year period 1988-90, regulations and guidelines be developed for the Teacher Residency Program based on the findings of this study and on the experience with the beginning teacher induction program.*

Currently, many purposes, programs, structures and evaluation procedures exist for inducting beginning teachers into professional practice. Most induction efforts are short-term, being designed primarily to introduce the beginning teacher to a specific school and teaching position rather than focusing on the technology of teaching, that is, on skills, knowledge and attitudes appropriate for given subject-matter fields and particular student needs. A full-year induction period with the above-mentioned characteristics would shift the focus to the developmental nature of teaching practice, particularly in the teacher's initial year of teaching. A reduced teaching load is almost universally recommended

in current reports on reforming teacher preparation, as is the provision of some type of advisor, preceptor, mentor, coach or support teacher. The need for these individuals to be trained in observation and coaching skills is also widely recommended.

The year-long induction program proposed for implementation in the school years 1988-89 and 1989-90 should be viewed as a preparatory stage for introduction of the mandatory one-year Teacher Residency Program outlined above.

Concluding Comments

The evaluation of Alberta's large-scale experiment with internships for teachers revealed that this type of entry year for beginning teachers has definite advantages in facilitating the transition from university student engaged in teacher preparation experiences to full-fledged practicing professional. Although the Initiation to Teaching Project had several shortcomings, these were outweighed by numerous positive attributes and by the strong support for the program from virtually all major educational groups. In addition to direct benefits for the neophyte teachers themselves, there were spillover benefits for supervising teachers, for students and for the schools.

There was general agreement with the stated purposes of the Initiation to Teaching Project, particularly among those directly involved in internships or in supervising them. All four specific purposes were accomplished in large measure, in the following order of attainment: (1) refinement of the teaching skills of interns, (2) assessment of the interns' suitability for placement, (3) development of professional relationships by interns, and (4) further development of professional skills of supervising teachers. A fifth, more general purpose of the project was assessment of the effectiveness of the internship program as a means of improving teaching competence. The fifth purpose provided the primary focus for the evaluation. The study revealed that this general purpose was also substantially achieved.

The call has been widespread for a structured and well-planned entry year or years for new teachers to replace the typical quick-immersion approaches to the induction of teachers. Inherent in such "sink or swim" approaches is the overwhelming tendency for them to be associated with a wide range of negative consequences for both students and beginning teachers. Other professions have made special provisions for such a transition experience for their novices, and the trend has been to lengthen rather than shorten these entry programs.

Based on extensive writings and research on teacher induction practices elsewhere (particularly those in several states in the U.S.A., which have already mandated internship experience for their beginning teachers), on experience in other professions, and especially on the findings from this study, the researchers strongly recommend the implementation of a mandatory year-long residency period for new teachers which would have the characteristics and implementation strategies outlined in this report. In order to facilitate implementation of the teacher residency program, the researchers also recommend the introduction of an intermediate program of induction for beginning teachers. This induction program would be in effect for the two years preceding the 1990-91 school year.

To implement the major recommendation and the proposed interim measures, additional resources will be required to provide release time for resident teachers, support teachers and resource personnel, and to finance in-service activities for these three categories of personnel. In view of the benefits to all major educational groups and individuals involved, the sources and amounts of these additional resources should be jointly determined.

The researchers consider that the proposed Teacher Residency Program would overcome many of the serious defects currently present in the experiences of beginning teachers and that it would improve many aspects of teaching as a profession. At the same time, a caution is expressed against excessive rigidity. As was the situation for Alberta's Initiation to Teaching Project, provincial regulations and guidelines should allow for some flexibility to suit local circumstances. Also recommended are discussions about this matter with

various national education associations and councils in order that interprovincial difficulties may be minimized. Discussion at the national level is warranted because of emerging interest in entry programs for beginning teachers in other provinces.

Finally, there remains a critical need for widespread reflection and extensive debate about the content and recommendations of this report. Schools, school systems and universities should be encouraged to forward the results of their deliberations to the various major educational organizations in the province and to the Minister and Deputy Minister of Education. Particular attention must be paid to the wide variety of issues related to the implementation of the major recommendations. Among these are the following: the impact on teacher education programs in universities, the procedures for training supervising teachers, means for integrating the reduced teaching loads of resident teachers into the regular teaching assignments in schools, and the criteria to be used in identifying appropriate schools for teacher residencies.

A one-year residency program which focuses upon the transition from university student to professional teacher should be adopted in Alberta. All participants and clients, including the broader community, stand to benefit substantially from the introduction of an entry program of this nature.